Connecting the Dots:

Aboriginal Workforce and Economic Development in Alberta

June 2010 - Report of the MLA Committee on the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Workforce Planning Initiative

Government of Alberta

Alberta

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Introduction from the Chair

On behalf of my MLA colleagues, Pearl Calahasen (Lesser Slave Lake), Tony Vandermeer (Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview), and Evan Berger (Livingstone-Macleod), I am pleased to submit the ***Report of the MLA Committee on the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Workforce Planning Initiative***.

The backdrop for our assignment is that Aboriginal people in Alberta continue to be under-represented in Alberta's workforce. The mandate given us was to see what could be done to increase Aboriginal participation in Alberta's workforce and economy. We were asked specifically to engage in a conversation with elected First Nations and Métis leaders, on a government-to-government basis, to see how we might work together in a way which would be beneficial for all Albertans, and most particularly Aboriginal Albertans. Underpinning this initiative was our Government's respect for the notion that solutions must come from local communities, and be supported by government, not the other way around.

Like many Albertans, I am somewhat aware of challenges faced by Aboriginal people. Speaking personally, I can say that my time on this Committee has been a great education for me. It has taught me more about the rich history and tradition of Aboriginal people, and of struggles that have roots which are centuries old. It has also taught me that there are many good news stories that few ever hear about, and there is unlimited potential in the fastest growing and youngest segment of Alberta's population. I have learned that there is what sometimes feels like a dizzying array of agencies from many levels of government as well as Aboriginal, educational and business communities, all with good intentions, who are trying to deal with the issues which will be addressed in this Report.

Most of our discussions centered on jobs, education and economic development. We have learned that each community is unique, with its own strengths and challenges. We have also recognized many common themes. None was more dominant than the importance of education as a crucial element to the success of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

My sense is that the dialogue about these issues is sometimes hampered by flawed assumptions, suspicion and frustration. One of the challenges for anyone working in this area is to ensure that they are armed with facts and reliable data, as opposed to stereotypes. There is also a tendency to focus on the negative. While the challenges are many, it is my hope that the work of this Committee will be a catalyst for positive action, optimism and a sense of partnership and common cause amongst all concerned.

As we travelled the province, we were asked many times what the result of our discussions would be. We were told that many had come before us; there had been lots of talk, but little in the way of concrete action. Therefore, you will see that one of our key recommendations is that the dialogue between the Government of Alberta, Aboriginal governments and the Government of Canada continue, with the commitment of all being that it leads to real action that makes a difference.

We have, over an 18-month period, had the privilege of meeting with many elders, elected leaders, community members and representatives of agencies, governments and industry. We have been welcomed into communities and people have spent time with us, giving their perspectives as to the challenges that Aboriginal people face and possible ways to overcome those challenges. On behalf of all members of our Committee, and all supporting staff from the Ministries of Employment and Immigration and Aboriginal Relations, I want to say "thank you" for your hospitality, wisdom and good will. I also want to acknowledge the hard work, commitment, patience and professionalism of the government staff and consultants who were with us every step of the way.

Verlyn Olson
MLA, Wetaskiwin-Camrose
Chair, MLA Committee on the
First Nations, Métis and Inuit Workforce Planning Initiative

Executive Summary

In 2008, the Ministers of Employment and Immigration and Aboriginal Relations appointed the MLA Committee on the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Workforce Planning Initiative. Over an 18-month period, the MLA Committee led an engagement process that included government-to-government meetings with First Nations and Métis leaders; urban Aboriginal dialogues; and, meetings with educational institutions, training providers, service delivery, community and economic development organizations, other levels of government, employers, and industry. The focus of the engagement was increasing the participation of Aboriginal people in Alberta's work force and economy.

The term 'engagement' was not lightly chosen. This engagement process went beyond consultation. The province wanted to know what Aboriginal Albertans felt the challenges were, what outcomes they wanted; and how they wanted the province to help them achieve those outcomes.

There were many good news stories and promising practices. The education and employment outcomes of Aboriginal Albertans continue to increase. Unfortunately, it's not enough. There were many more stories about Aboriginal people and communities who continue to face barriers and challenges to education, training, and economic opportunity.

The Committee received many suggestions on *what* needs to be done, and just as many suggestions on *how* things should be done. We heard about numerous programs and services for Aboriginals in Alberta, but we also heard about the need for more coordination, awareness and effectiveness. The critical message was that for real change and improved results for Aboriginal people in Alberta, things would have to be done differently.

From all the discussions, input and information gathered the Committee has made 30 recommendations, which are outlined in the accompanying table. For an explanation of terminology and acronyms used in the Report, see **Appendix A**. For a list of engagement participants, see **Appendix B**.

Six themes stood out as compelling from the engagement process. The themes are tools for how to move forward on the recommendations.

1. Collaboration

- The need for the province and First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA), the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC) and other Aboriginal communities to work *together* and to create partnerships with other levels of government, industry and education and training institutions. Collaboration will require a joint planning process that works with Aboriginal communities to build a bridge between where they are and where they want to be. Joint planning can also determine who is accountable for doing what needs to be done.

2. Coordination

» Better coordination will help to align goals and resources in a manner that addresses the challenges effectively, without duplication of efforts or means. Better coordination is needed across the Government of Alberta, Aboriginal governments, communities and organizations, and with other levels of government.

3. Community

» Aboriginal communities want to determine the issues, obstacles and challenges they need to focus on in relation to increasing employment and economic opportunities. The Aboriginal peoples of Alberta are diverse and some communities have different needs than others.

4. Capacity

» Equipping Aboriginal people and communities with the education, knowledge, ability, and technology to increase their participation in the workforce and economy is critical to their future and Alberta's future productivity and competitiveness.

5. Communication

» In spite of the programs and services available for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people there are awareness gaps. Not enough Aboriginal communities are aware of the resources and supports they could access. Not enough communication is happening between government departments. And not enough Albertans are aware of the positive stories coming out of some Aboriginal communities. Improving what and how we communicate will help to connect the dots.

6. Commitment

» It will take relationships, commitment and political will to make the kinds of changes that are needed to improve the employment and economic situation for Aboriginal Albertans. Commitment means continuing the dialogue between political leaders. Commitment also means working with different jurisdictions to create partnerships that lead to action and results.

The recommendations that follow address what needs to be done. Some are specific to the Government of Alberta, many are focused on the collective efforts of Aboriginal leaders, communities and organizations, different levels of government and stakeholders. Increasing the participation of Aboriginal people in Alberta's workforce and economy can only be achieved if their educational attainment is also increased.

This re-alignment of how government, Aboriginal communities, industry, training providers and educational institutions work together will take time and effort, however, we need a new way of doing things if we want to get the results we all want to see.

MLA Committee Recommendations

Collaboration

1. In collaboration with First Nations, Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC), Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA), and other Aboriginal communities, the Government of Alberta continue to support the development and implementation of community-based collaborative workforce action plans. (p. 45)

2. The Government of Alberta, in partnership with First Nations, develop strategies to press the federal government to address any inequities in Kindergarten to Grade 12 education funding which impedes First Nation student success. (p. 19)

3. The Province, First Nations, MSGC, NMAA, other Aboriginal organizations, and the federal government increase collaboration to improve coordination, reduce duplication, and increase innovation in the delivery of labour market programs and services for Aboriginal people in Alberta. (p. 25)

4. The Government of Alberta, First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations increase collaboration to determine employment and training program needs in order to take advantage of opportunities with local industry. (p. 26)

5. The Government of Alberta examine the system of standards and safety certification imposed by industry to determine if it acts as a deterrent to employment and entrepreneurship for Aboriginal people. (p. 39)

Coordination

6. The Government of Alberta review the array of programs and services it delivers and/or funds to support Aboriginal employment and labour market training with the goal of increasing coordination, creating efficiencies, streamlining processes and reporting requirements, and, eliminating duplication. (p. 26)

7. The Government of Alberta and Aboriginal communities engage with training providers and educational institutions to improve the quality of learner assessments (i.e. abilities, skills, interests, job prospects, etc.) to ensure an optimum fit between a client's career aspirations and government-funded training opportunities. (p. 27)

8. The Government of Alberta, educational institutions, training providers, and Aboriginal communities review policies related to learner assessments and eligibility (as it relates to Aboriginal learners) with a view to increasing flexibility or creating efficiencies. (p. 27)

9. Expand the length of time allowed for Aboriginal learners (who receive government funding for training) to complete academic upgrading if they have had a government-approved literacy assessment that identifies more time is required to be successful. (p. 29)

10. All Government of Alberta departments that provide funding for Aboriginal economic development adopt a cross-ministry strategic approach that increases coordination, joint planning, transparency, and assessment of viable opportunities for Aboriginal communities. (p. 36)

11. The Province adopt ways to enhance transitional support services in major urban settings in partnership with urban Aboriginal organizations, such as Friendship Centres, and in collaboration with other levels of government. (p 43)

MLA Committee Recommendations

Community

12. Aboriginal communities, school boards and parents, with the help of the province where appropriate, develop and implement strategies for increased opportunities for Aboriginal families to become more involved in the education of their children. (p. 20)

13. The Government of Alberta actively engage with First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations to develop skills inventories, local level data, and labour market studies that can be used to support long-term community, workforce and economic development planning. (p. 33)

14. The Province continue to support and foster urban Aboriginal partnerships and initiatives that address the employment, education and economic development priorities of urban Aboriginal communities. (p. 43)

15. The Government of Alberta explore ways to maximize the effectiveness of First Nations Colleges in Alberta given their unique location, status and program focus on Aboriginal student success. (p. 22)

Capacity

16. The Government of Alberta develop and implement a cross-ministry employment strategy to attract, recruit and retain qualified Aboriginal people into the Alberta Public Service. (p. 46)

17. The Government of Alberta support individual and organizational capacity development for First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations through exchange opportunities, such as internships, secondments and mentoring. (p. 32)

18. The Government of Alberta ensure that rural and remote Aboriginal people and communities have internet-based options for accessing education and training to prepare for employment and lifelong learning. (p. 21)

19. Given the increasing number of temporary foreign workers employed in the province, the Government of Alberta work with the Government of Canada to promote the hiring of Aboriginal people in Alberta. (p. 39)

20. First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations work with all levels of government and partner organizations to create an environment for encouraging more entrepreneurial activity in Aboriginal communities across Alberta. (p. 36)

21. The Government of Alberta press the federal government to expand information technology infrastructure on reserve to ensure First Nations people living on reserves in Alberta are able to access internet services for the purposes of education, training, business and economic development. (p. 32)

22. The Government of Alberta partner with MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations to ensure Aboriginal people and their communities are able to access internet services for the purposes of education, training, business and economic development. (p. 32)

23. First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations pursue partnerships with other levels of government, business, industry, and training providers to provide information technology (IT) resources (i.e. hardware and software) and training to take advantage of internet connectivity. (p. 32)

MLA Committee Recommendations

Communication

24. The Government of Alberta, First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal communities, develop and implement strategies with other levels of government, business, industry, and organizations to eliminate racism and to increase awareness of the contributions of Aboriginal peoples, cultures and communities to Alberta. (p. 18)

25. The Government of Alberta explore ways to improve communication with First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal communities and organizations about provincial programs and services for Aboriginal people, and to improve awareness and linkages across ministries that serve Aboriginal people. (p. 47)

26. Employment and Immigration ensure Aboriginal people in Alberta can access provincial career counseling and employment services that are available to all Albertans. (p. 30)

27. Ensure that Aboriginal people and communities are aware that provincially-funded English-as-a-Second Language programs may be available to eligible Aboriginal learners. (p. 29)

Commitment

28. In keeping with the Province's commitment to a long-term workforce strategy, the Government of Alberta develop an Aboriginal Workforce Strategy, informed by the FNMI Workforce Planning Initiative and engagement process. (p. 48)

29. Further engagement regarding workforce participation and economic development continue on a government-to-government basis through new or existing mechanisms, agreements or arrangements. (p. 48)

30. The dialogue between the Government of Alberta, First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal communities, and the Government of Canada continue, with the commitment of all being that it leads to real action that makes a difference. (p. 48)

MLA Committee Membership and Mandate

In 2008, the Government of Alberta launched the First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Workforce Planning Initiative, co-led by Employment and Immigration and Aboriginal Relations and supported by Education and Advanced Education and Technology. The overall goal of this initiative is to increase the participation of Aboriginal people in Alberta's workforce and economy. On September 2, 2008, the Ministers of Employment and Immigration and Aboriginal Relations appointed the ***MLA Committee on the First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Workforce Planning Initiative.*** The Committee members consisted of:

- **Verlyn Olson** (Chair)
  MLA, Wetaskiwin-Camrose
- **Pearl Calahasen**
  MLA, Lesser Slave Lake
- **Tony Vandermeer**
  MLA, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview
- **Evan Berger**
  MLA, Livingstone-Macleod

The role of the Committee was to champion the initiative. Its mandate included the following activities:

- engage on a government-to-government basis with First Nations and Métis leaders and officials across Alberta;
- participate in urban Aboriginal dialogues with representatives of urban Aboriginal community organizations (First Nation, Métis, and Inuit) and service providers;
- meet with representatives of industry, employers, educational institutions and training providers; and
- prepare a final report on the engagement process with recommendations and/or policy options.

The term of the Committee expired on May 31, 2010; the FNMI Workforce Planning Initiative is ongoing.

Our Engagement Process

In 2006, the Government of Alberta released its long-term labour force strategy, *Building and Educating Tomorrow's Workforce* (BETW). It recognized that Aboriginal people in Alberta are underrepresented in the workforce and that increasing participation among First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples was a priority. While it was clear that the Government of Alberta was committed to increasing the labour market and economic participation of Aboriginal people, what was less clear was the best way to go about this.

Community Action Plans

Between 2006 and 2007, the Ministry of Employment and Immigration worked with First Nations and Métis representatives to create "community action plans." The intent of these plans was for the community to identify issues and barriers to employment from a community perspective. In all, thirteen community action plans were developed and shared with the Government of Alberta.

In response to these plans, the Government of Alberta created a draft *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Workforce Action Plan*. The original plan was to go forward with a typical consultation process to obtain input and feedback on the draft plan. However, a few things happened along the way that would change the direction the government was heading.

From Consultation to Engagement

The Government was hearing from First Nations and Métis representatives that the process needed to be more inclusive of their governments and/organizations. Moving forward would require leadership support. To respond to the request to work more inclusively with First Nations and Métis communities and to engage leadership, our four-member FNMI Workforce Planning Initiative MLA Committee was appointed.

Three other key developments also happened in 2008:

- In May 2008, the GOA and the Grand Chiefs of Treaties 6, 7 and 8 signed the historic *Protocol Agreement on Government to Government Relations*. This agreement recognized the need to strengthen relations and work together to address issues of mutual importance.
- In June 2008, the GOA and the Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA) signed a seven-year Framework Agreement to work together towards enhancing the economic and community well-being of Alberta's Métis people.
- In September 2008, the GOA and the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC) signed a three-year interim funding agreement to support ongoing efforts to improve local autonomy and economic self-sufficiency for the province's eight Métis Settlements.

About the same time, a concept known as "public engagement" was brought to the attention of Government. This model is based on "dialogue" that brings various parties together to jointly discuss and identify issues, problems, solutions, actions, and responsibilities. The ministries co-leading this initiative, Employment and Immigration and Aboriginal Relations, adopted a modified version of this concept. With the appointment of our MLA Committee, which would meet with First Nations and Métis leadership, the government hoped to have an "engagement process" that was respectful of the government-to-government relationship and that would provide the opportunity for open dialogue about Aboriginal workforce and economic participation.

This new engagement process would reflect the spirit of the Protocol Agreement and would respect the goals of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA) Framework Agreement and the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC) interim funding agreement.

For us, what made an engagement different from a consultation was that it acknowledged the role of Aboriginal communities in determining their strengths and challenges and sharing their vision for increasing workforce participation and economic development. The hope was this engagement approach would

be a more positive, inclusive process and would support FNMI communities and leaders in bringing their interests, issues and ideas forward and actively involving them in the implementation of solutions. The original community action plans would be used to help launch discussions.

Engaging with Leaders, Communities, and Stakeholders

On July 29, 2008, Cabinet gave approval to proceed with an "engagement" and in September 2008, this MLA Committee was appointed to lead this engagement process on behalf of the GOA.

We looked forward to the opportunity to meet with First Nation and Métis leadership in their communities or in a location that was convenient for everyone.

Over the past 18 months, our Committee made:

- *community visits* to four First Nations, a Métis Settlement, the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation (AWN) and the community associations of Peerless Lake and Trout Lake;
- held 15 *engagement meetings* with elected leadership of First Nations, Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA), and the Métis Settlement General Council (MSGC);
- hosted *urban Aboriginal dialogues* in five major urban centres; and
- met on 17 different occasions with representatives of employers, industry, business, educational institutions, and other levels of government. (Details appear in **Appendix B**).

Aboriginal People and the Workforce

This engagement process provided us with an opportunity to experience first hand the diversity amongst Alberta's Aboriginal peoples. According to the 2006 census, Alberta has the third-largest Aboriginal population in Canada. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people: Indian (First Nation), Métis, and Inuit. In Alberta, 188,365 people identified themselves as Aboriginal: 52 per cent as First Nations, 45 per cent as Métis, less than one per cent Inuit. These are three distinct peoples with unique histories, languages, cultures, and beliefs.

Approximately 63 per cent of Alberta's Aboriginal population lives in urban centres. Edmonton is home to the second largest urban Aboriginal population in Canada (after Winnipeg). Calgary has the fifth largest urban Aboriginal population. Aboriginal people also make up a significant portion of the population in several smaller urban centres in Alberta, including Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, and Lethbridge. Many Aboriginal people have lived their entire lives in Alberta's urban centres but there has also been significant migration to cities from reserves, settlements, and rural and remote communities throughout the province.

41
Wood Buffalo National Park
Lake Athabasca
Fort Chipewyan
25
39
29
High Level
26
36
Fort Vermilion
45
Lake Claire
Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement
Fort MacKay
Fort McMurray
32
33
TREATY 8
(1899)
47
37
Peace River
38
Gift Lake Metis Settlement
31
46
27
Wabasca
28
Peavine Metis Settlement
35
Lesser Slave Lake
43
34
High Prairie
30
44
40
Slave Lake
Grande Prairie
42
East Prairie Metis Settlement
Lac la Biche
3
8
Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement
Cold Lake
4
17
Elizabeth Metis Settlement
Kikino Metis Settlement
Grande Cache
14
St. Paul
9
7
Fishing Lake Metis Settlement
1
Morinville
2
EDMONTON
13
5
Hinton
Lloydminster
TREATY 6
(1876)
Wetaskiwin
Jasper National Park
Hobbema
6
10
11
15
Rocky Mountain House
12
16
Red Deer
Banff National Park
TREATY 7
(1877)
Morley
CALGARY
21
22
23
24
20
Medicine Hat
Lethbridge
Pincher Creek
19
18

First Nations in Alberta

Treaty 6

1. Alexander First Nation
2. Alexis Nakota Sioux First Nation
3. Beaver Lake Cree Nation
4. Cold Lake First Nations
5. Enoch Cree Nation
6. Ermineskin Cree Nation
7. Frog Lake First Nation
8. Heart Lake First Nation
9. Kehewin Cree Nation
10. Louis Bull Tribe
11. Montana First Nation
12. O'Chiese First Nation
13. Paul First Nation
14. Saddle Lake First Nation
15. Samson Cree Nation
16. Sunchild First Nation
17. Whitefish Lake First Nation #128 (Goodfish Lake)

Treaty 7

18. Blood Tribe
19. Piikani Nation
20. Siksika Nation

    Stoney Tribe:

    21. Bearspaw (Eden Valley)
    22. Chiniki (Morley)
    23. Wesley (Big Horn)
24. Tsuu T'ina Nation

Treaty 8

25. Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation
26. Beaver First Nation
27. Bigstone Cree Nation
28. Chipewyan Prairie First Nation
29. Dene Tha' First Nation
30. Driftpile First Nation
31. Duncan's First Nation
32. Fort McKay First Nation
33. Fort McMurray First Nation
34. Horse Lake First Nation
35. Kapawe'no First Nation
36. Little Red River Cree Nation
37. Loon River First Nation
38. Lubicon Lake Indian Nation
39. Mikisew Cree First Nation
40. Sawridge First Nation
41. Smith's Landing First Nation
42. Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation
43. Sucker Creek First Nation
44. Swan River First Nation
45. Tallcree First Nation
46. Whitefish Lake First Nation (Atikameg)
47. Woodland Cree First Nation

Metis Settlements in Alberta

Buffalo Lake	Gift Lake
East Prairie	Kikino
Elizabeth	Paddle Prairie
Fishing Lake	Peavine

Map Legend

- Treaty 4 (1894)
- Treaty 6 (1876)
- Treaty 7 (1877)
- Treaty 8 (1899)
- Treaty 10 (1906)
- Treaty Boundary
- Métis Nation of Alberta Association Regional Zones
- (#) First Nation in Alberta
- Metis Settlement
- City/Town

First Nations

There are 47 First Nations in Alberta and 134 Reserves covering three Treaty areas (Treaties 6, 7 and 8). According to the 2006 census, 92,275 people identified as First Nation. Some First Nations are affiliated with tribal councils which work together on behalf of their member First Nations on political, policy or regional issues, such as workforce participation and economic development.

Métis

According to the 2006 census, Alberta is home to 85,495 Métis people, Canada's largest Métis population. There are two primary Métis representative bodies in Alberta: the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC) and the Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA). The MSGC is the political and administrative body for the collective interests of the eight Alberta Métis Settlements, which cover 1.25 million acres. Alberta is the only province that has a Métis land base and governance structure entrenched in provincial statute. As of 2009, there were 7,990 Settlement members. The MNAA is the representative voice for its approximately 35,000 members. The MNAA's mission is to advance the socio-economic and cultural wellbeing of the Métis people of Alberta.

Inuit

Most Inuit people live in Canada's North - Nunavut, Northwest Territories, northern Labrador and Quebec - however, there are also Inuit people living in Alberta. Approximately 1,600 people in Alberta have self-identified as Inuit although the population has been estimated at closer to 4,500. Most Inuit people in Alberta live in Edmonton and Calgary. The Inuit population is one of the fastest growing segments in Alberta with growth rates above 200 per cent in the past decade.

Other Aboriginal People and Communities

Other Aboriginal people and communities in Alberta include non-status or non-registered Indian; individuals who are registered Indians but who are not members of a First Nation; and Métis and Inuit people who may or may not affiliate with any Aboriginal organization. There are also isolated communities, cooperatives, enterprises, and other communities on provincial land.

Examples of other Aboriginal people and communities include the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation (AWN), which represents the non-status Indians who descended from Cree and Beaver tribes who traditionally lived in what is now Jasper National Park and the Rocky Mountain foothills and who now live in the Grande Cache area. There are also the Lubicon Cree; historic Métis communities

such as Joussard and Grouard; and the Mountain Cree Camp (commonly known in the past as Smallboy's Camp), which consists of First Nations people who left the Ermineskin Nation to live a traditional lifestyle in the Alberta foothills.

Aboriginal Labour Force Participation

There are interesting dynamics at play in terms of the employment picture for Aboriginal people in Alberta. Until the economic downturn in 2008, the employment rate for Aboriginal people off-reserve was getting much closer to the employment rate for the rest of Albertans. However, the economic downturn has left its mark. In April 2010, the unemployment rate for all Aboriginal people off-reserve was 17 per cent. When broken down into First Nations and Métis peoples, the rates were 24.5 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. The unemployment rate for Alberta as a province was 7.4 per cent.

For First Nations people on reserve, we heard about unemployment rates as high as 80 per cent of the population and as low as 25 per cent. We heard a similar situation for the Métis settlements. Some reserve and settlement members are having more success at employment than others but, overall, it was generally agreed that unemployment rates are much too high.

Aboriginal Albertans - Young and Growing

Alberta has one of the youngest Aboriginal populations in the country and it is growing faster than the rest of the population. Almost a third (31 per cent) of the province's Aboriginal population is under 14 years of age compared to 19 per cent for the on-Aboriginal population. Half of all Aboriginal people living in Alberta are children and youth under 24 years of age.

Section One: What We Heard

Over the 18 months the Committee listened and gathered input for this report, we were often told how tired Aboriginal people in Alberta are of talking about problems and issues. They told us that many of the issues are the same as they were 10, 20, and 50 years ago. The engagement was an opportunity for Aboriginal Albertans and their communities to tell us their challenges and successes and where we might work together to improve outcomes that were mutually beneficial. Aboriginal leaders and elders shared with us their visions for their people and their communities. Many voiced concern about their young people and their hope that they become a more integral part of Alberta's workforce in the future.

In the section that follows, we have outlined some of the key conversations, ideas, issues, challenges that we heard regarding barriers to employment, education, labour market training, employment programs, economic development, and community capacity. Examples of what was shared in conversations with the Committee are sprinkled throughout the report in text boxes. This section also includes what we heard during Aboriginal dialogues held in five major urban centres in the province. We have proposed 30 recommendations, which are found throughout the report. Following this section, we propose a way forward based on themes that surfaced during the engagement process.

Barriers and Challenges to Education and Employment

Throughout this engagement process, we asked everyone to share their experience, knowledge or comments about barriers and challenges to education and employment for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in Alberta. Some people spoke about their personal experience or the experience of a family member, others spoke of what they've observed or witnessed. Some of the barriers that came up frequently included:

- not having enough education or training for employment;
- lack of jobs in or near some Aboriginal communities;
- dealing with racism, discrimination and negative stereotypes;
- lack of transportation to or from work for jobs outside the community or not having the money to buy a transit pass for a job in the city;
- not having a driver's licence for employment purposes. Many Aboriginal families may not have a car to learn to drive;
- quality affordable child care is difficult to find;
- the lack of quality, affordable housing for Aboriginal people is an ongoing issue no matter whether you live in the city, on reserves or settlements, or in smaller communities;

- not enough social and financial supports for transitioning into educational institutions, training, apprenticeships, employment, or the workplace; and
- personal barriers such as addictions, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD), mental health, physical disabilities, domestic abuse, or inadequate life skills.

The barriers listed above point to the complex nature of problems that can exist for some Aboriginal people in Alberta. For example, where individuals haven't had the benefit of positive parenting and role models or are dealing with addictions or abuse, they may not be ready for employment. Any combination of these barriers makes it that more difficult to pursue employment or fulfill one's potential. The barriers listed above require individual, community or societal change. Aboriginal people and communities, First Nations and Métis leaders and governments, the Government of Alberta, and all Albertans can help to alleviate or eliminate the barriers that are preventing some Aboriginal Albertans from participating in the workforce and economy.

Racism, Discrimination and Negative Stereotypes

One of the more pervasive barriers we heard about was racism and discrimination. We heard examples of discrimination against Aboriginal people by landlords, employers, individuals within government, industry, service and educational providers, human resources departments, and by citizens.

Racism against Aboriginal people happens on a daily basis in schools, workplaces, and communities and it needs to be addressed. Discrimination and negative stereotypes are damaging to individuals and to communities.

As a Committee, we saw the challenges that some communities face, but we also saw a lot of positive people and images. We saw new housing being built on several First Nations reserves that was also a source of training and employment for people and support to the local economy. We toured a new daycare on a reserve that provided a full range of child care services from infancy right up to pre-school programming. The daycare was also a source of employment for the community.

> The residential school problem still lingers large and there is legitimate reason not to accept off-hand all the "benefits" associated with education.

We heard about holistic approaches to supporting women out of poverty and into trades training and permanent employment. We were impressed with the efforts of some employers to introduce Aboriginal cultural awareness in the workplace and to come up with solutions for transporting their Aboriginal workers back and forth from their communities to work. It was refreshing to hear so many positive stories to know that partnerships being made by Aboriginal people and with Aboriginal people to remove barriers and obstacles to education, training, and employment.

If Aboriginal leaders and communities and the Government of Alberta promoted more of the positive images mentioned above, it would help to reduce the negative stereotypes and perceptions that exist. Based on what we heard and saw, there is a disconnect between the many positive things that are happening for Aboriginal people and the persistence of old stereotypes.

"The policy in the school system of moving students ahead chronologically (social advancement through grades based on age, not achievement) does not work as some students need more time to grasp basic math and language skills."

Eliminating racism against Aboriginal people is a big challenge and requires the efforts of individuals, communities, governments and employers. Albertans need to be better informed and educated about Aboriginal people in Alberta. They also need to challenge unacceptable behaviour toward or negative comments about Aboriginal people.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta, First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal communities, develop and implement strategies with other levels of government, business, industry, and organizations to eliminate racism and to increase awareness of the contributions of Aboriginal peoples, cultures and communities to Alberta.

Education

First Nation and Métis leaders, representatives of Aboriginal organizations and educational institutions spoke passionately about the challenges and barriers facing Aboriginal learners. Education is a crucial element in getting people ready for the work place but there are many Aboriginal people in Alberta who are not gaining the necessary education, skills, and training they need to successfully enter the workforce. This section and the following section on labour market training speak to the need for improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal people.

We heard about a range of issues and concerns: the high drop-out rate (low graduation rates) among Aboriginal youth; the low quality of Kindergarten to grade 12 education, especially on First Nation reserves or in rural and remote areas (which often results in the need for academic upgrading later in life); the intergenerational impact of residential schools; poorly qualified teachers; and the lack of access to education for remote and rural communities with few high schools. All of these are significant issues that can impact future employment prospects.

The mandate of the Committee focuses on education and training as it relates to preparing for the workplace, not the K-12 system. However, we realize that one depends on the other. Without a good educational foundation in elementary and secondary school, a person's chance of succeeding in post-secondary or other types of education and training programs can be severely impeded. For this reason, we want to acknowledge the concerns we heard from First Nations leaders, and others, about the quality of education on reserve.

First Nations Education on Reserve

While education is an area of provincial responsibility, First Nations education on reserve falls under federal jurisdiction. We heard from First Nation leaders their concerns about the low quality of education on reserve as well as funding disparities between provincial schools and schools on reserve. The position of the Alberta government is that First Nations students should have access to equivalent education programs and resources, whether attending school on- or off-reserve. The long-term impact of poor quality education on First Nation reserves affects all Albertans, especially when First Nations people leave their reserves to seek employment or further their education and training in other parts of the province.

We also want to acknowledge that the Government of Alberta has moved to improve the situation for all Aboriginal students. During the term of this Committee, the province announced the creation of the Education Partnership Council in October, 2009, which is a collaboration between the Government of Alberta and Alberta's First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders. This council will guide the future direction of FNMI education in Alberta. In February 2010, an historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta and the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs in Alberta aimed at strengthening First Nation education in Alberta. The Committee is optimistic that these new agreements will help to address many of the concerns that were brought to our attention. We are including a recommendation from the Committee to underscore the importance of the need for progress to be made to improve this situation.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta, in partnership with First Nations, develop strategies to press the federal government to address any inequities in Kindergarten to Grade 12 education funding which impedes First Nation student success.

Community and Parental Involvement

Parents and communities have primary responsibility for ensuring their children are attending school and receiving an education. Aboriginal leaders, community organizations, educational institutions, and parents all told us there is work to be done in this area. They acknowledged a need to be more involved in education at the community level and to make education more culturally relevant for their children. Educators told us they want more parental involvement in decisions that affect the education of Aboriginal students.

> The education system does not adequately recognize that Aboriginal learning styles and needs are different.

For various reasons, including the intergenerational impacts of residential school, many Aboriginal adults and parents have shied away from any involvement with schools, school boards, and educational institutions. This situation is changing and we are encouraged by the trend toward more community connectedness to education and the labour market – at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels.

Many of Alberta's colleges, Aboriginal colleges, and post-secondary institutions are making educational inroads into Aboriginal communities. They told us what they are doing to welcome Aboriginal students and be more culturally relevant. We met with executive members of *Careers: The Next Generation*, an organization committed to supporting Aboriginal student achievement, who explained how they work with the community and industry to provide career workshops and organize mentoring and training programs. We are also aware that the Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology (AET) is working with FNMI communities and that it recently launched a research project entitled, *Reaching and Affecting FNMI Communities for Success in Learning*, that will explore new learning models for Aboriginal communities.

School attendance rates in some areas are too low, with students missing too much school due to lack of transportation or childcare, family issues, lack of parental involvement, or other reasons.

More involvement of Aboriginal people in education is needed in all communities throughout the province – urban, rural or remote. As we were told, the key to making positive changes will be engaging elders, elected leaders, parents, youth and adult learners to instill a value for education in all Aboriginal communities.

Recommendation:

Aboriginal communities, school boards and parents, with the help of the province where appropriate, develop and implement strategies for increased opportunities for Aboriginal families to become more involved in the education of their children.

Access to Education for all Aboriginal Albertans

A message that we heard quite often from First Nations and Métis leaders and educational institutions was that many students do not want to leave their communities to relocate for education. We heard this from parents who have to send their children to board out in the nearest town or urban centre to be able to attend high school as well as from adults who wanted to pursue post-secondary education or training but were reluctant to move to the city, especially if this meant relocating their families. While this situation isn't unique to Aboriginal people – many rural and remote families also encounter this – this conversation did bring attention to the issue of access to education and the need for choice.

Some Aboriginal communities in Alberta have a high school, college or post-secondary presence; others do not. Some individuals and families want to pursue education locally, others prefer to move to urban centres or to particular institutions. Many Aboriginal leaders told us they'd like to see more types of education and educational programs available in and for their communities, especially online and distance education, or e-learning.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta ensure that rural and remote Aboriginal people and communities have internet-based options for accessing education and training to prepare for employment and lifelong learning.

First Nations Colleges in Alberta

The subject of access to education was also discussed in meetings with representatives from educational institutions and training provider organizations, and during the urban Aboriginal dialogues. Members of the First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium (FNAHEC), which includes all of the First Nations colleges in Alberta, stressed to the Committee how important local access to education is for Aboriginal people and how the First Nations colleges fulfill this need.

In Alberta, there are eight First Nations colleges. The colleges are often located within First Nations communities or in close proximity. The student population is predominantly Aboriginal but the colleges are open to non-Aboriginal people. The primary goal of these institutions is to deliver a variety of programming to Aboriginal adult learners in a culturally relevant and supportive environment. FNAHEC strongly believes that the cultural aspect in their education programs is what contributes to success for Aboriginal students. The colleges see one of their key roles as preparing students to be able to successfully attend other post-secondary institutions.

> The lack of qualified and culturally aware teachers on reserves and high teacher turnover does not provide the needed continuity, cultural awareness, and skill level required in the classroom.

First Nations colleges do not qualify for provincial (public) funding because most of them are considered not public institutions. Without a change in their designation they are unable to access public funding like other colleges in Alberta. The colleges do receive some federal funding and some provincial grant funding for program and student services enhancements. The First Nations colleges offer a variety of programming including basic education, nursing, social work and counselor training, business management, community wellness, and early childhood and youth care. They are currently seeing a real demand from Aboriginal people who require academic upgrading, workplace literacy, and basic pre-trades training.

Some of the colleges, in collaboration with Alberta's universities and Alberta Advanced Education and Technology (AET), have delivered the Aboriginal Teacher Training Program. The program is currently being delivered in partnership with the University of Alberta and Northern Lakes College. This program has led to an increase in the number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers in Alberta classrooms. According to AET, the program's success has been due to the strong partnership relationship developed with the First Nations colleges and their ability to offer students the opportunity to complete their degrees while maintaining community, family, and cultural connections. The value of this type of approach, and the role of the First Nations colleges, was underscored by participants in a number of our dialogues and meetings.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta explore ways to maximize the effectiveness of First Nations Colleges in Alberta given their unique location, status and program focus on Aboriginal student success.

The Committee would like to note that many of Alberta's colleges and universities are making concerted efforts to provide welcoming and supportive environments for Aboriginal people. We know that most of the province's universities and many colleges have created Aboriginal student services and have developed partnerships among themselves and with communities to open the door to more input and collaboration. Access to education for Aboriginal Albertans is definitely improving. Our intent with the education-related recommendations is to open the door even further.

Aboriginal Training for Employment in Alberta

In Alberta, both the provincial and federal governments have a role in labour market training. For the province, the key ministries are Employment and Immigration, and Advanced Education and Technology. For the federal government, the key departments are Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), Service Canada, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

For the Government of Alberta, the Ministry of Employment and Immigration provides a variety of services to Albertans to support their efforts to become employed, including training programs. Each program has specific eligibility criteria. The province offers two specific programs for Aboriginal people:

- ***First Nations Training to Employment Program***, which assists First Nations people in finding and keeping meaningful employment and supports the development of partnerships between the private sector and First Nations and other Aboriginal communities/groups.

- ***Aboriginal Training to Employment Program***, which supports the development of partnerships with First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal communities and groups to facilitate the participation of Aboriginal people in training projects.

Employment and Immigration also offers Alberta Works Income Support, which is available to eligible adults to participate in employment and training services, as well as Alberta Job Corps, which helps Albertans with the opportunity to work and earn a wage while gaining employment skills. The focus of the Government of Alberta's employment and training programs is to help adult Albertans get the skills they need to get a job, get a better job, or increase their skills to keep their job. The Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology, which is focused on education at the college and university level, is also involved in trades training for Aboriginal people.

The federal government departments, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and Service Canada, also have a role in labour market training. The key program has been the *Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement Strategy (AHRDAS)*, which has been in place since 1999. The program was set up to help Aboriginal people prepare for, find, and maintain jobs. Funding is allocated to Aboriginal organizations, commonly known as AHRDA holders. There are 13 AHRDA holders in Alberta: 11 First Nation organizations, the Métis Nation of Alberta and the Métis Settlements General Council. These organizations design and deliver employment and skill development programs, and provide services that can include career counseling, job search and referral as well as interventions such as income support, training costs, and child care and travel allowance assistance.

As of April 1st the federal AHRDA program became the *Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)* program. It's a new 5-year program with more emphasis on demand-driven skills development, partnerships with the private sector, and across all levels of government, and accountability for improved results.

Labour Market Training, Employment Programs, and Jurisdiction

With different levels of government involved in labour market training, there are likely to be times when the rules and policies don't work for everyone. We heard concerns from First Nations leaders and representatives about First Nations people who want to participate in training but can't get the income support, or living allowance for shelter and food they need in order to attend training. The federal government has responsibility for on-reserve First Nations people, which includes income support. The department of Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC), another federal department, provides a learner benefit (income support) to all eligible on-reserve First Nations people who are attending Alberta Employment and Immigration funded training. Alberta Employment and Immigration provides on-reserve First Nations members who are in training programs with tuition, mandatory fees and books. We were told these policies have worked for a lot of people, however, we also heard there are people who are falling between the cracks and not getting access to, or funding for, programs that could help them. This was especially the case for First Nations people leaving the reserve to pursue training.

> training has to be more closely aligned with career goals and opportunities. There is lots of training, but it is not necessarily leading to long term careers.

As a Committee, we heard many concerns about the transition from the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement Strategy (AHRDAS) program to the new Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) program. The AHRDA program, which falls under Human Resources and Skills Development Canada or HRSDC, was set up to help Aboriginal people prepare for, find, and maintain jobs. The program is delivered by community-based Aboriginal organizations (see box Aboriginal Training for Employment in Alberta for more detail). Discussions about labour market development programming pointed to a lack of coordination, and some duplication, between what the AHRDA holders were doing in terms of programming and services and what the provincial government is doing. There was also a perception by some First Nations and Métis leaders and representatives that the federal government may be moving toward "off-loading" labour market training programs for Aboriginal people to the province.

The recent change from the AHRDA program to the ASETS program (with greater emphasis on demand-driven skills development, partnerships with the private sector, and across all levels of government, and, accountability for improved results) may be an opportunity for different levels of government to work with First Nations and Métis organizations to help Aboriginal Albertans acquire the skills and training needed to succeed in the workforce. It's also an opportunity to improve coordination and to leverage any available funding through innovative partnerships between all levels of governments, across government, and with the private and public sectors.

Recommendation:

The Province, First Nations, MSGC, NMAA, other Aboriginal organizations, and the federal government increase collaboration to improve coordination, reduce duplication, and increase innovation in the delivery of labour market programs and services for Aboriginal people in Alberta.

Employment Programs and Services

During this engagement process we were fortunate to hear about a lot of good work happening with labour market training and employment programs that are helping to increase Aboriginal participation in the workforce in Alberta. As we discovered, there are numerous government-funded training and employment programs for Aboriginal people. However, we also discovered that there is a certain amount of confusion in terms of "who does what" and "what's available." We heard that in some places in the province there are no resources, while in other places there may be several service providers (First Nations, Métis or the GOA) doing the same thing.

On this note, we would suggest there may not be a need for all organizations (GOA or First Nations or Métis) to be offering similar services. There are times when government should ask itself if it is best-placed to provide a particular service, and consider the possibility of having other groups or organizations take on that responsibility. Likewise, for First Nations and Métis organizations that exist in the same community, discussions about economies of scale, organizational strengths and weaknesses may lead to new opportunities and better service and outcomes for community members.

During the urban Aboriginal dialogues, we spoke to many service providers who serve Aboriginal people in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray. They told us about the administrative burdens they believed made it difficult for them to focus on providing assistance to their clients. These burdens included issues around reporting requirements, competitive processes, timelines, uncertainty of programs, dealing with multiple funders, constant changes to funding programs including criteria, or, staff turn-over. Stakeholders expressed a sense of bewilderment when programs that, in their opinion, were achieving results, lacked the necessary financial supports to continue. They suggested that future programs provide more flexibility and be responsive to local realities, not "one size fits all."

We definitely heard a call, in both our meetings with leaders and in the urban Aboriginal dialogues, for more coordination and streamlining within the Government of Alberta but also between Aboriginal community-based service providers. Overall, we heard that services for Aboriginal people need to be more accessible to the people who are looking for help.

Recommendations:

The Government of Alberta review the array of programs and services it delivers and/or funds to support Aboriginal employment and labour market training with the goal of increasing coordination, creating efficiencies, streamlining processes and reporting requirements, and, eliminating duplication.

The Government of Alberta, First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations increase collaboration to determine employment and training program needs in order to take advantage of opportunities with local industry.

Labour Market Training Programs

In terms of preparing Aboriginal people for the workforce, we heard about the need for more pre-employment training, which may include courses such as life skills, the culture of work, or preparing for the trades. We heard about a gap in service in terms of career counseling, for all ages, but particularly for young Aboriginal people. And while there is a lot of emphasis on training to get people into jobs, there needs to be more post-employment or post-training supports such as coaching, mentoring or buddy systems that help Aboriginal people who are in the workforce retain employment.

Flexibility needs to be injected into programs so that students who have to leave for short periods of time can still complete a program. This is particularly important for Aboriginal students who may have family responsibilities or other issues that prevent them from completing programs.

Some Aboriginal leaders and representatives told us there are training programs that are not as responsive to the needs of First Nations and Métis communities and individuals as they could be. They also raised concerns about education and training institutions in terms of high tuition fees and a lack of commitment to the outcome of the training. There was also a perception that certain institutions were unduly focused on operating as businesses and filling seats rather than providing quality training experiences that could lead to long-term employment and careers.

A specific concern brought to our attention by some institutions was "learner assessments," which are a requirement for Aboriginal people seeking eligibility for government-funded training. It was suggested that assessments be more student-focused so there was better matching between a person's career interests, skills and attributes and available training. Counseling staff at some training

institutions told us they wanted a stronger role in decision-making on government policies that applied to their students. They felt there were times when the interpretation of government policy led to unintended consequences.

Counseling staff at some educational and training institutions, who are responsible for completing learner assessments for Aboriginal students and who know their individual circumstances, felt they had the expertise to make an informed assessment and to interpret and apply government policy within the context of their community. An added benefit, we were told, could be less time involved in exchanging paperwork with government staff who may be located in a different community or urban centre. The Committee supports the idea of less government bureaucracy (i.e. red tape) and more flexibility regarding program policy and eligibility for Aboriginal people, if the proper accountability measures are in place.

There was also concern expressed about how decisions are made in Aboriginal communities and organizations in terms of who gets approved to attend government-funded training. In addition, some communities struggle with having the capacity, expertise or tools to make an appropriate assessment. There may be room for improving the system for assessing potential learners that would also increase accountability. The Committee suggests that more discussion about learner assessment policy as it applies to Aboriginal people take place between government and educational institutions and training providers.

Recommendations:

The Government of Alberta and Aboriginal communities engage with training providers and educational institutions to improve the quality of learner assessments (i.e. abilities, skills, interests, job prospects, etc.) to ensure an optimum fit between a client's career aspirations and government-funded training opportunities.

The Government of Alberta, educational institutions, training providers, and Aboriginal communities review policies related to learner assessments and eligibility (as it relates to Aboriginal learners) with a view to increasing flexibility or creating efficiencies.

Input from Educational Institutions and Training Providers

- Student expectations are not always consistent with their qualifications or abilities; there are times when they cannot be placed into their preferred training program.
- Training providers are concerned with program rules that require students who do not complete a program to wait for four years before they are again eligible for government sponsored training.
- Increasing distance education would enable more students to get training and pursue an education.
- Teachers need Aboriginal awareness training to maintain student interest and make education relevant.
- Work with the Aboriginal community to identify needs and design programs and policies.
- Provincial and federal funding programs are complex; individual learners can get caught between the two.
- There is a failure to move Aboriginal students into post-secondary education. Ninety per cent of them are in academic upgrading. There is not enough funding or spaces for the demand.
- Institutions have come a long way in creating a more welcoming environment for Aboriginal students.

Academic Upgrading and Literacy

An area of training that came up many times in our conversations was academic upgrading. According to the First Nations and Métis representatives we met with, as well as some education and training providers, there is a critical need for more academic upgrading for Aboriginal people. The low quality of K-12 education on some First Nation reserves and Métis settlements, and low high school completion rates for many Aboriginal people (especially youth) in the province has resulted in a significant portion of the Aboriginal population with inadequate literacy, math and computer skills. In today's knowledge economy, these essential skills are a requirement for post-secondary programs and future success in the workforce.

Academic upgrading programs are offered by most colleges, continuing education programs, and technical institutes. These programs can lead to a high school diploma or allow students to complete high school equivalency courses required for admission into a post-secondary program. The Government of Alberta, under the Employment and Training Services component of Alberta Works, may provide income support for individuals who are taking upgrading to get a job. During the Calgary urban dialogue, participants positively mentioned Bow Valley College's Aboriginal academic upgrading, which is tailored to meet the needs of Aboriginal students. They also expressed their desire for more of this type of programming and for it to be offered at other colleges or institutions.

We heard about students who can't get the academic upgrading they currently need because they have already received credits for courses taken when they were in high school. They may have been passed through their high school courses despite not having a sufficient understanding of the material. We also heard about students who received government funding to take academic upgrading but are struggling with completing their program in the amount of time set out in government policy. Some students can't get in to the program while others who are in it, can't finish. Situations such as these warrant some examination.

Recommendation:

Expand the length of time allowed for Aboriginal learners (who receive government funding for training) to complete academic upgrading if they have had a government-approved literacy assessment that identifies more time is required to be successful.

Another reason given for the increased demand for academic upgrading is limited English proficiency. For some Aboriginal students, English is not their first language and they may not have had enough exposure to develop a large vocabulary. As the Committee was told, the level of English may be adequate to achieve K-12 education, but it may not adequate for post-secondary school. The Committee heard a request from a number of Aboriginal communities for English as a second language training. The Government of Alberta does provide some assistance in this area. We would encourage Aboriginal communities to take advantage of the programs that are available.

Recommendation:

Ensure that Aboriginal people and communities are aware that provincially-funded English-as-a-Second Language programs may be available to eligible Aboriginal learners.

The Committee cautions that academic upgrading, although extremely important given the current quality of education offered in some Aboriginal communities in the province, should be seen as an interim solution only. The overall goal must be to improve education standards and Aboriginal student achievement to the point where upgrading would no longer be necessary. Until that time, the Committee foresees a need to increase academic upgrading for Aboriginal learners in the short-term to ensure their success in the workforce in the long-term.

Labour Market Information Centres and Resources

Many First Nations and Métis people leave their homes on reserves and settlements or other rural or remote communities to seek employment in urban centres. They sometimes turn to provincially run employment centres or labour market information centers for help. However, we were told there are times when Aboriginal people are turned away from these services on the basis – or assumption - that they are receiving income support on reserve. This determination would need to be made on a case by case basis but until that is done this shouldn't preclude Aboriginal people from accessing employment-related services such as job market information, resume services, publications, or career counseling that are available to all Albertans, including Aboriginal Albertans.

Recommendation:

Employment and Immigration ensure Aboriginal people in Alberta can access provincial career counseling and employment services that are available to all Albertans.

Partnering for Training

The Committee was able to meet with representatives from educational institutions, training organizations, and industry to discuss labour market training for Aboriginal people. Across the province, there are many initiatives underway, some of which have been very successful, while others have had mixed results. The success of training programs relies on many factors, but we were told that bringing the right partnerships together can make all the difference. Successful partnerships require the combined efforts of the Aboriginal community, local industry, training institutions or providers, and government. The involvement of the Aboriginal community was very important to ensuring that local needs were part of the planning.

"The success of training programs for Aboriginal people relies on many factors... bringing the right partnerships together can make all the difference."

In Grande Prairie, we heard about the city's involvement with a national program known as the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI). The city signed an AWPI agreement in 2005 and since that time has brought together local industry, employers, three levels of government (municipal, provincial, and federal), educational institutions and other stakeholders to explore ways to increase Aboriginal workforce participation. One of its recent AWPI initiatives included a job shadowing program for Aboriginal high school students. The program provided summer employment for 12 students that included job experience, mentoring, support with transitioning to an urban area and demystifying the college environment. The Grande Prairie AWPI representatives believed the partnership and agreement was having success but they thought they would be more successful with greater involvement of the Aboriginal communities, especially the leadership. They felt more needed to be done to build that relationship and trust.

In Southern Alberta, the Committee visited a pre-employment trades project being run by Piikani Employment Services. This project is a partnership that involves the Piikani Nation, Alberta Employment and Immigration, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and Community Futures Treaty Seven. The training program is providing hands-on training in the building construction field for twenty to forty trainees. Following training, participants who are employment ready will be placed with local employers. During the course of the training, up to 12 homes will be built on the Piikani Nation. These will be the first homes built on the

Nation in approximately 15 years. Piikani Nation leaders told Committee members that this partnership took time to put together but that it included elements they believed would lead to success such as cultural awareness, employment transition and placement, and three and six month follow-up for trainees.

The Committee also met with the executive of *Careers: The Next Generation*. This organization, which is a private sector initiative, has formed a network of partnerships across the province to help expose Aboriginal youth to different careers and occupations. It focuses on creating "pathways" for Aboriginal youth, which can include recruiting employers to take on students in accredited apprenticeship or internship programs.

Another training program referred to as an example of a successful partnership was the Syncrude Aboriginal Trades Preparation Project taking place in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. This program also came about as the result of a multiple partnership which included Syncrude Canada, the Government of Alberta, the Athabasca Tribal Council, Métis Nation of Alberta, individual First Nations communities, and Keyano College. The program recently had its first graduation. Something common to these partnerships, and that we heard about on more than one occasion, was that partnerships benefit the individual, but they also benefit the communities where these individuals come from.

Community Capacity and Development

The level of readiness of First Nations and Métis governments and Aboriginal organizations to carry out what needs to be done to increase labour market participation and economic development varies considerably. We saw some very successful operations and administrations and we saw others that had almost no resources. There are many factors at play that affect community capacity including leadership, governance, funding, size of membership, geographic location, skill and education levels, and physical infrastructure. Almost everyone we met with acknowledged capacity – at both the community and individual level - as a critical issue that needed to be addressed. Workload and capacity issues hamper First Nations and Métis administrators in their dealings with their own people, other levels of government, industry, employers, and education and training institutions. Organizations are struggling with the growing demands placed on limited and often under-resourced staff. Capacity needs range from simple requirements such as assistance with proposal-writing or data collection and input to more complex, longer-term functions such as strategic planning. Alberta Employment

> First Nations share a lack of capacity: "When you see Chief and Council, you see the whole of government ... there is no civil service behind them."

> Our organizations have a lack of staff capacity ... we have some staff doing three jobs.

and Immigration has opened up, when possible, training spots for First Nations or Métis service delivery staff to help increase their capacity. More on-the-job coaching, guidance, and mentorship through role modeling would be very beneficial.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta support individual and organizational capacity development for First Nations, MNAA, MSGC and other Aboriginal organizations through exchange opportunities, such as internships, secondments and mentoring.

Internet Connectivity

Alberta has done a great deal to bring the benefits of connectivity to remote communities in the province. Unfortunately though, there are Aboriginal people that do not have internet access and this is hampering their abilities to access information and resources that could help them. We realize that this situation is not unique to Aboriginal communities and would encourage the Government to continue its efforts to bring connectivity to as many areas of the province as is feasible. Improved connectivity can facilitate options and alternatives for Aboriginal Albertans such as distance learning and training closer to home, the pursuit of innovative business ideas, and social networking sites for youth looking for employment. Numerous First Nation leaders told us about the success of Sunchild E-Learning and how its online distance learning programs has helped students and employees in the areas of capacity building, administration, and governance. A number of Aboriginal communities could benefit from what has been applied with success in other communities.

> It has always been known that the answer lies in training and capacity building and the biggest initiative is about doing the right things to enable Métis people to move towards self reliance.

Recommendations:

The Government of Alberta press the federal government to expand information technology infrastructure on reserve to ensure First Nations people living on reserves in Alberta are able to access internet services for the purposes of education, training, business and economic development.

The Government of Alberta partner with MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations to ensure Aboriginal people and their communities are able to access internet services for the purposes of education, training, business and economic development.

First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations pursue partnerships with other levels of government, business, industry, and training providers to provide information technology (IT) resources (i.e. hardware and software) and training to take advantage of internet connectivity.

Labour Force Data and Planning

Good labour force planning depends upon all kinds of reliable data, from economic trend analyses to industry and job projections to local labour market conditions. In the case of First Nations and Métis communities, we were told there is also a need for skills inventories to connect their members with employment and training opportunities. For example, what marketable skills do individual members have? What are the education levels? What kind of work experience do members have? What are the jobs available in and around the community? Knowing this information will help communities identify gaps that need to be addressed to help people get or create jobs. As important as skills inventories are, they are only part of what's needed. We would encourage industry to take a role in identifying and sharing what skills are required for work that is available or work that may be available in the future.

We were also told that the information currently available to First Nations and Métis Settlements covers large regional areas and does not provide local labour market information (i.e. employment prospects) within reasonable commuting distances of Aboriginal communities. While this situation does exist, we would like to share one recent development which holds hope for the future of planning, at least on First Nations reserves. For the first time, Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey is being conducted in a First Nations community. In January, 2010, the Siksika First Nation, east of Calgary, in partnership with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the Government of Alberta, started conducting an on-reserve household survey.

From our observations, aside from access to quality data, there are many Aboriginal communities that require database systems and the expertise to input and interpret data for workforce and community planning purposes.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta actively engage with First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations to develop skills inventories, local level data, and labour market studies that can be used to support long-term community, workforce and economic development planning.

Aboriginal Economic Development and Entrepreneurship

At the beginning of our term, the Committee went to see some examples of best practices in economic development and entrepreneurship in Aboriginal communities. We went west to Grande Cache to meet with the Aseniwuche Winewak, where we toured a successful welding training centre that was created in partnership and with support from industry and government. We traveled north to Fort McKay First Nation (near Fort McMurray) where we saw a number of economic development initiatives including the new Creeburn Lake Lodge, which provides accommodations for oil sands workers.

> Economic development is the key, not welfare.

We went east to Whitefish Lake First Nation No. 128 on Goodfish Lake (near St. Paul) where we toured Goodfish Lake Development Corporation's very successful drycleaning and laundry facility as well as its protective clothing and garment factory. We also traveled south to meet the Chief and Council of the Siksika Nation and had the pleasure of visiting the impressive Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park (BCHP), site of the signing of Treaty 7. BCHP is not only a cultural, education and entertainment centre, it has been designated a national historic site of Canada.

> The system of land ownership and title is taken for granted off reserve and off settlement where owning land provides a building block for wealth generation.

During our travels we were able to experience the hospitality of the Sawridge Inns and Conference Centres in Fort McMurray, Slave Lake, and Edmonton. The first Sawridge Hotel was opened by the Sawridge First Nation Band in Slave Lake more than thirty years ago. The organization and its leaders continue to be at the forefront of Aboriginal economic development and self-sufficiency in western Canada.

The Committee felt fortunate to meet some of the Aboriginal people behind these businesses who were providing the leadership and vision for economic success. These visits were excellent examples of what's happening in some Aboriginal communities, but they also raised a few questions: "Why don't more Albertans know about these successful Aboriginal businesses?" and, "Why aren't there more of them?"

In many meetings, Aboriginal people and representatives from various organizations spoke about the progress being made, but they also pointed out how far there is to go. First Nations and Métis leaders spoke of their frustration and their inability to bring about the kind of economic change they want as quickly as they want. A critical part of this scenario was geographic location. For some remote or rural locations there is no industry nearby that can help to generate economic development. For others, industry is in their backyard but they do not have the capacity or authority to take advantage of it.

Some Aboriginal leaders and representatives criticized some employers for not hiring local Aboriginal people. Others reminded us that Aboriginal people contribute to local economies when shopping and using services in nearby towns and cities. In many cases, the contribution to that local economy is very significant. There seemed to be a sentiment that the contribution was often one-way.

Some First Nation leaders pointed to the amount of money spent on welfare or income support on reserve versus economic development. They questioned whether this was perpetuating an environment of welfare dependency in a time when many Aboriginal communities are trying to create economic opportunities for themselves and for their members. More than a few leaders told us that the status quo was no longer tolerable.

Economic Development on Reserves and Settlements

For First Nations reserves and Métis Settlements in Alberta, discussions about economic development are invariably tied to issues of land and home ownership, geographic location, land use, and resource development. It's a complex subject for First Nations that also touches on lack of equity, treaty rights, federal jurisdiction, consultation, and regulation. Economic development on reserve is complicated by federal jurisdiction and issues relating to land title. Several First Nations leaders shared their frustration about their inability to create commercial real estate developments on reserve.

The Government of Canada has recently taken steps to change this situation by passing legislation to facilitate the development of major commercial real estate on reserve land when requested by the band. As we understand it, this legislation would enhance the value of Aboriginal assets by addressing legislative and regulatory barriers to Aboriginal economic development. It would be optional legislation that would be available to First Nations across Canada. For the legislation to apply, a First Nation would need to have a commercial or industrial proponent, a province willing to participate, and support from the community. We would encourage our government to monitor these developments closely and to be open to cooperation in this matter.

There are several areas related to Aboriginal economic development that the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada are both focusing on including: strengthening Aboriginal entrepreneurship, developing Aboriginal human capital, enhancing the value of Aboriginal assets, leveraging greater access to commercial capital, and increasing participation in resource development opportunities. Aboriginal economic development is ripe for new ideas, new partnerships, and a willingness from all involved to seize opportunities to do things differently.

The Government of Alberta and Aboriginal Economic Development

The Committee was told that the Government of Alberta is doing some very positive work in the area of Aboriginal economic development. What is needed are improvements to how programs and funding are coordinated. Participants said it was confusing to know which government ministry offered what type of assistance. For example, funding for assistance or support for various types of economic development initiatives can be accessed through the ministries of Employment and Immigration, Aboriginal

> The government is placing high emphasis on social programs while neglecting economic development. The focus is wrong. Take care of economic development and the rest will sort itself out.

Relations, Finance and Enterprise, and Agriculture. While each of these ministries serves Aboriginal people, they may be working in isolation of one another.

The level of bureaucracy and regulation in government ministries was also discouraging to some Aboriginal people and may inadvertently be shutting down potential economic development projects or aspiring entrepreneurs. Another missing piece was help with strategic long-term planning. Being able to get funding for individual projects was helpful, but it would be better if it could be part of an economic road map for their future. Too much time was being spent chasing short-term projects and dollars and not enough time was being spent setting realistic goals and long-term plans.

Recommendation:

All Government of Alberta departments that provide funding for Aboriginal economic development adopt a cross-ministry strategic approach that increases coordination, joint planning, transparency, and assessment of viable opportunities for Aboriginal communities.

As noted earlier, there is a growing entrepreneurial leadership emerging in some Aboriginal communities in Alberta. The Aboriginal business owners we met with were convinced that economic development and more entrepreneurship were the way toward greater self-reliance. The Government of Alberta supports entrepreneurship development for Aboriginal people and communities. From what we observed, there is definitely room for more entrepreneurship both large and small-scale. This is an area in which the private sector in Alberta, if willing to be innovative, can find new partners, new opportunities and new businesses with Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

The subject of entrepreneurship often came up in relation to young Aboriginal people who had business ideas they wanted to pursue. With modern internet technology, location may not be an obstacle to operating a business from a reserve, settlement or a rural community. Another benefit is that small businesses and niche markets often lead to jobs for others. During our urban Aboriginal dialogues, it was suggested that young Aboriginal people living in cities are particularly interested in creating small businesses, but need more financial support and encouragement.

Recommendation:

First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations work with all levels of government and partner organizations to create an environment for encouraging more entrepreneurial activity in Aboriginal communities across Alberta.

Input from Industry, Business, Employers

- Need to develop trust and relationships with Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal leadership needs to be directly involved.
- The lack of equity within Aboriginal communities is a huge challenge. The family home is often used as collateral in small business lending, but there is no home ownership on reserve.
- Government needs to be bolder and take some risks; programs should be more flexible and less bureaucratic and complex.
- Employers should be involved in government program development; more communication with industry is needed.
- Provide training together with education in Grades 9 -10 and start mentoring students.
- Industry has developed great linkages with some colleges with training programs for Aboriginal youth that lead to employment, the difficulty is with retention and keeping people engaged.
- Companies most successful in hiring Aboriginal workers have kept culture in mind.
- Government has a role in sharing information and best practices.
- Success factors for increasing employment: get leaders involved and set goals that cover attraction, retention and development.

Overall, in spite of the many challenges, there was definitely interest and desire among Aboriginal communities to create economic opportunity. A number of First Nation and Métis leaders talked about partnerships they had established with industry (some longstanding and some more recent) that were benefitting everyone. The Alberta Aboriginal Capital Corporations (ACCs) were mentioned for their role as developmental lenders, business services providers, and facilitators of economic development. We were also told that the Government of Alberta has made available some helpful tools and resources. Last year's *Gathering for Success* symposium, sponsored by Alberta Aboriginal Relations, was mentioned a number of times as both educational and inspiring.

Another positive initiative that was mentioned during the Calgary Urban Aboriginal dialogue was the work under way with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. In 2009, the Chamber released a research report[1] that identified four overarching priority actions to improve Aboriginal labour market outcomes. One of its recommendations was that businesses seeking to work with Aboriginal communities align their objectives with those of Aboriginal communities. Businesses should also consider the perspectives, interests, culture, and values of the community. Using this type of approach was echoed in other parts of the province, (particularly in the Fort McMurray region). It speaks to the importance of building effective relationships based upon mutual respect, trust and understanding so that all parties are successful.

[1] Navigating the Circle: Barriers, Challenges and Strategies to Improve Aboriginal Labour Market Outcomes, March, 2009 www.calgarychamber.com

On February 10, 2010, the Government of Alberta introduced Bill 1, the Alberta Competitiveness Act. The province is looking to work closely with industry, business leaders, and Albertans to ensure Alberta increases its competitive advantage within Canada and the global economy. Its focus on partnership may be a timely opportunity for the province and First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal communities to come together on projects that benefit everyone. First Nations and Métis communities and organizations that are open for business and looking to partner may find the province receptive, especially in terms of encouraging innovation, productivity and the adoption of technology.

Competition for Employment

Discussions about economic development often included the subject of jobs. Until the recent economic downturn that began in 2008, Alberta's economy was booming. This unprecedented growth brought labour shortages and a demand from industry for more skilled and semi-skilled workers. One option that many employers in Alberta turned to was recruiting workers through the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program, which is administered by the federal government. As we found out, there is considerable concern from Aboriginal leaders and communities about this program.

The perception is that temporary foreign workers take job opportunities away from Aboriginal Albertans. The question that often came up was: "Why aren't employers and industry looking at Aboriginal people as a source of labour to be hired or developed?"

The concern was about lost opportunities for Aboriginal Albertans. There appears to be a lot of misinformation about the TFW program, how immigration to Alberta works, and what kinds of services are available for TFWs, immigrants and refugees.

The Government of Canada requires employers to prove that they have made every possible effort to hire Canadian citizens or permanent residents before applying for approval to hire a foreign worker. The Government of Alberta's position is likewise; that Albertans should be hired first. It's also worth noting that the TFW program is employer-driven. The employer, not the government, pays for all the costs associated with recruiting foreign workers, which may include transportation, housing, etc.

The key information that came out of our conversations with Aboriginal leaders and communities was the desire to train their people – who are Albertans - for jobs in Alberta. We know through our conversations with industry representatives that there are some longstanding partnerships with Aboriginal communities that have been successful in meeting the demand for workers. We also heard from industry that Aboriginal communities could be doing more to position themselves as an attractive source of labour. On the other hand, we also heard that some First Nations had provided training to their members only to find out or be told that industry wasn't hiring.

The province will continue to need international immigration for its workforce, but it will also need to give Aboriginal Albertans more opportunity to participate in the labour market. The Aboriginal youth population in our province is growing rapidly and they will be the workers of tomorrow. We would also strongly encourage more First Nation and Métis communities and local industry to actively seek one another out and to partner in the area of skills development. In this way, Aboriginal people throughout Alberta could more fully participate in the opportunities in the Alberta economy and workforce.

Recommendation:

Given the increasing number of temporary foreign workers employed in the province, the Government of Alberta work with the Government of Canada to promote the hiring of Aboriginal people in Alberta.

Safety Certification and Accreditation

The Committee received many strong messages about the impact of safety certification requirements on First Nations and Métis governments, organizations, small businesses, and individuals. We were told that current safety certification requirements impose unnecessary burdens on small businesses and entrepreneurs and that the cost of safety training programs was becoming prohibitive. There was a general feeling that safety training was becoming an industry unto itself and was moving away from a more "common sense" approach to what was required to work safely.

The frequency of training to get or renew "tickets" (due to the short time period safety certificates are valid) was cited as a major barrier for labour market participation and economic development for Aboriginal people. First Nations and Métis leaders told us that small Aboriginal-owned businesses could not compete with larger businesses because they could not afford the high costs of safety training for staff. The Committee is raising this issue because it came up frequently in discussions with Aboriginal leaders. However, we believe this barrier has more to do with safety standards set by industry than by government. We would like to encourage First Nations and Métis leaders and their various economic development representatives to engage industry in discussions on ways to ensure safety certification and accreditation requirements work effectively but do not disadvantage Aboriginal people. We are also asking the Government of Alberta to take a closer look at industry-imposed safety certification and standards.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta examine the system of standards and safety certification imposed by industry to determine if it acts as a deterrent to employment and entrepreneurship for Aboriginal people.

Urban Aboriginal Communities

Input from Urban Aboriginal Dialogues

- It is important to focus on Aboriginal newcomers to cities, but it's also important to focus on Aboriginal people who have been living in the city for a long time.
- Aboriginal people coming to urban centres lack familiarity with their surroundings and some do not have the required skills to cope.
- Governments need to look at what the Aboriginal community is already doing and determine how that can be supported.
- Multi-year funding (government and non-government) is important for effective program delivery.
- There needs to be a continuum of care so that when individuals are finished programs there is follow up and continuing support.
- New ways of communicating are important to improve information sharing in and for urban Aboriginal communities.
- Aboriginal organizations are key in helping people successfully transition to and within an urban environment.
- Long-term training and retention programs are key to ensuring that Aboriginal people acquire permanent employment.

The engagement process included five urban Aboriginal dialogues, which were held in Lethbridge, Grande Prairie, Calgary, Fort McMurray, and Edmonton. The dialogues were an opportunity to hear from Aboriginal community organizations, service providers, representatives from municipal governments, economic development organizations, industry, business, employers, educational representatives, as well as local First Nations, Métis and Inuit representatives.

Almost two-thirds (63 per cent) of Aboriginal Albertans live in urban centres. According to the 2006 Census, the Aboriginal population in the Edmonton area included more than 52,000 people, which was a 27.3 per cent increase from the 2001 Census. Of that figure, approximately 22,000 were First Nations and 28,000 were Métis. The Aboriginal population for the Calgary area exceeded 26,500 people, which was a 26 per cent increase from 2001. The growth of the Aboriginal population is due to a number of factors including a higher birth rate than non-Aboriginal people, more people

identifying themselves as Aboriginal, and more people moving to the city in search of jobs and better opportunities.

There are also many Aboriginal people and families who have lived in urban centres for several generations. The city has always been their home. The urban Aboriginal community is a diverse population made up of different groups and community interests. It is not homogeneous and it varies from urban centre to urban centre. We were told that given the diversity of urban communities it can be challenging to access and engage the urban Aboriginal community in a collective way. There is no one clearly identifiable representative body that speaks to the varied interests and priorities of urban Aboriginal people.

The urban dialogues demonstrated that there are many common challenges and barriers for Aboriginal people on reserve, settlement, rural or urban areas. Many participants and stakeholders in the dialogues echoed what we heard in our meetings with First Nations and Métis leaders; that there is a need for combating negative stereotypes, for more collaboration, partnership, and strategic planning, increased flexibility in programs and funding, and more coordination between governments and service providers. Many of the recommendations found throughout this report apply to the urban Aboriginal community context as well.

Supporting Transitions

A major focal point for the urban dialogues was discussions about transitions and supports. Many Aboriginal people have to choose between staying in their community, moving to, or commuting to an urban centre to pursue education, training, or employment. The resulting separation from the land, their culture, and the support networks of their family and extended family can make the transition difficult. For Aboriginal people for whom the city has been home all their lives, transitions within the school system, into training or postsecondary education, and into employment can present a range of challenges.

We heard that Aboriginal learners and workers need to be able to focus their energies on getting an education or employment rather than being consumed by trying to meet basic needs such as housing, childcare and transportation. They may also require supports in other areas such as life skills, parenting, wellness, literacy, job readiness, and upgrading. Transitional supports for Aboriginal people are needed on a continuum as they work toward increasing their participation in Alberta's workforce and economy. For some, support may be required as they get ready for training or education or employment. For others, support may be required once they are employed and needing a mentor, coach or a tutor who can provide one-on-one guidance and help them adapt to a new environment.

A number of participants called for a continuum of supports using a more holistic approach that would be inclusive of families, reflect community, and be culturally relevant. Others called for better communication about the resources, information, and services available in urban centres. Knowing where to go or who to call is particularly important for Aboriginal people attempting to navigate systems they are not familiar with such as the different levels of government (municipal, provincial, federal) or transportation routes around the city or the various administrative procedures involved in completing applications or accessing programs and services.

We spoke with many service providers who spoke of their experiences in providing services to their Aboriginal clients. They also talked about their concerns and needs as agencies and organizations. They had much to say about administrative burdens that took their focus away from providing assistance to Aboriginal learners and workers. These burdens included competitive processes, short timelines, uncertainty of program duration, dealing with multiple funders, constant changes to funding programs, onerous reporting criteria, lack of sustainable funding sources, and high staff turnover. Some of these concerns have been noted earlier in this report in the section on labour market training and employment programs, but it's worth reiterating the desire to see future programming to be more coordinated between the various service providers, flexible in design, and responsive of local realities and priorities.

During the urban dialogues in Calgary and Edmonton, the Committee was able to speak with some Aboriginal youth. It was important to us to hear their perspectives. Ensuring that Alberta's growing Aboriginal youth population receive the supports they need to complete school and have success in the workplace is important for them and for the future of Alberta's workforce.

Input from Aboriginal Youth

- Transitional mentors and advocates in schools and elsewhere would be very helpful.
- Aboriginal youth may be more comfortable connecting with someone who is Aboriginal.
- Most employers do not understand family in the context of Aboriginal cultural traditions and values
- Youth aren't aware of what training programs are available to them.
- Aboriginal youth need more real-life training – finances; how to find a job; how to juggle school and work.
- Start support systems early, especially in the urban setting.
- Some Aboriginal youth may not have the support of their leadership or parents; need someone committed to their development.
- Don't make assumptions; not all Aboriginal youth want to go into the trades.
- There is frustration with past stigmas and stereotypes.
- Employers should not underestimate youth and keep an open mind.

The Government of Alberta, and the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations in particular, work with other governments and organizations to address the issues of urban Aboriginal people in Alberta. It is a partner with the federal government in the delivery of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) in Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge. The Government of Alberta also supports projects and initiatives in other urban sites across the province through funding to Alberta Friendship Centres and other community organizations. The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations also helps to facilitate relationships between urban Aboriginal organizations and other provincial ministries.

Based on what we heard during the urban dialogues, there is willingness and opportunity for urban Aboriginal community organizations, service providers, representatives from municipal governments, economic development organizations, industry, business, employers, educational representatives, as well as local First Nations, Métis and Inuit representatives to improve the awareness and quality of services and programs for urban Aboriginal people. We encourage urban Aboriginal organizations and service providers to come together to address the urban Aboriginal communities' priorities and to put their collective energies into partnerships for making change and finding solutions that work for the communities they serve.

Recommendations:

The Province adopt ways to enhance transitional support services in major urban settings in partnership with urban Aboriginal organizations, such as Friendship Centres, and in collaboration with other levels of government.

The Province continue to support and foster urban Aboriginal partnerships and initiatives that address the employment, education and economic development priorities of urban Aboriginal communities.

Section Two: A New Way Forward

Over time, specific themes emerged in the engagement process: **collaboration, coordination, community, capacity, communication,** and **commitment**. We view these themes as both a byproduct of the engagement and as tools for how to move forward as communities and governments, individually and together. There are things that First Nations and Métis leaders, governments, communities and people need to do, and there are things that the Alberta government needs to do. We both have to do more to engage industry, business, educational institutions and training providers in creating opportunities to help Aboriginal Albertans take advantage of all that Alberta has to offer its citizens.

These themes are the foundation for how to move forward and build on the positive things that are already happening. All of the recommendations in this report align under one or more themes. We view all of the recommendations as possible, some are specific to Government, but many are achievable through the collective efforts of partnerships. Some recommendations will take more time than others; many will rely on joint action and shared responsibility with First Nations, the MNAA, the MSGC and other Aboriginal communities.

Collaboration

Collaboration is key to supporting First Nations, Métis and Inuit people and communities in Alberta to gain education, training, employment and economic success. Collaboration requires relationship building and a willingness to find mutually agreeable goals and outcomes. It can also prevent governments and others from working in isolation.

When the Committee first met with First Nations and Métis leadership we sought agreement to collaborate on workforce planning. We asked if they would support their staff, who were working in areas such as human resource development, economic development, and employment training, to continue working with government staff toward increasing labour market participation and creating opportunity for economic development. In response, First Nations and Métis leaders told us how important it was for them or their staff to be "at the table." They wanted their plans to be a part of the discussion.

What also became clear as the engagement process evolved was that the best possible place to address collaborative planning – or joint planning – would be locally, where the work is done. During our engagement, a few areas in the province initiated joint planning with the creation of regional collaborative forums. These forums are a coordinating and planning tool. They have the potential to put decision making, joint planning, and mutual responsibility where it belongs – with service providers and clients at the local or community level.

The forums can bring together, by region, service providers, practitioners, or representatives, of First Nation and Métis governments, provincial departments, and (where necessary) federal or municipal government departments. The regional collaborative forum concept provides a 'table' to which local service and program delivery officials bring issues and topics affecting them. Depending on the issue being addressed, officials or representatives of other departments would also be invited to the table.

These forums could among other things:

- give organizations a point of entry into government;
- relieve the frustration of navigating a large bureaucracy;
- identify and address instances of duplication or crossover services;
- provide a place to discuss issues and ideas and plan collaboratively with people who understand local conditions;
- leverage all available resources; and
- foster a spirit of innovation and problem solving.

An important outcome of this process for all stakeholders would be the opportunity to build or enhance relationships. Investing in the process of collaborative workforce planning with First Nations and Métis leaders and governments and Aboriginal communities will help to inform strategic labour market planning at the provincial level.

Recommendation:

In collaboration with First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal communities, the Government of Alberta continue to support the development and implementation of community-based collaborative workforce action plans.

Coordination

The need for more coordination of programs and services for Aboriginal people was a clear message heard by the Committee. Coordination needs to happen within the Government of Alberta and across departments, but it also needs to happen with other governments (both federal and municipal) as well as within Aboriginal governments and organizations. If all of these parties came together to coordinate what's available and what needs to be done, we are convinced there would be less duplication, less frustration, more streamlining and efficiencies, and better outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Community

The engagement process confirmed for us the value placed on community in Alberta. The Government of Alberta respects that Aboriginal communities are best-placed to identify their local needs, issues and solutions. We support community-based decision making and view government's role as helping to create the conditions and putting the tools in place for communities to find what works best for them – especially in the areas of education, labour market participation and economic development.

In the visits we made to Aboriginal communities, and the time we had with Aboriginal community members we met with a number of leaders and elders. Some elders told us how self-reliance was the root of a healthy community and it was important that they regain this for themselves. They also expressed concern for the youth in their communities and how they wanted a better future for them. Some leaders talked about how they are strengthening their communities and their members with better governance and more accountability. Others told us how they also need to focus on health and well-being. More than a few times, we heard Aboriginal leaders talk about how their vision for their communities was to secure for their members the same opportunities enjoyed by all Albertans.

Capacity

To move forward on increasing employment and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people, First Nations and Métis governments and organizations and communities need to improve their capacity to do the work that needs to be done. Capacity building is required on a number of levels: individual (developing skills and experience), community (governance and civic involvement), organizational, and technological. First Nations and Métis leaders as well as industry, education and training providers asked that the government provide assistance in this area.

Access to modern technology increases a community's capacity to grow and helps to develop community members. We have made a number of recommendations aimed at increasing capacity in Aboriginal communities through the use of internet technology with a goal of more access to education, and employment and economic development opportunities.

We view the goal to increase capacity as a shared responsibility, but we also see an opportunity for the government to show some leadership. As a government, we can help to lead the way by ensuring that qualified Aboriginal people are hired into the Alberta public service and that opportunities exist to develop capacity via internships, secondments and mentoring.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta develop and implement a cross-ministry employment strategy to attract, recruit and retain qualified Aboriginal people into the Alberta Public Service.

Communication

Communication is included in the way forward because it is both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to increase the level of awareness of the Government of Alberta's programs, services, resources and initiatives for Aboriginal people. We believe that most people would be surprised at the extent of what is available. It was clear during the engagement process that some people we met with were aware of the various programs and resources, but there were many others who were not aware. There is an opportunity to do a better job of communicating what the government does in terms of Aboriginal programs and services, both internally across departments and externally with First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal communities.

There is also a real need for more stories about the positive work that's happening, be it by the Government of Alberta, First Nations or Métis communities or organizations, or their partners in industry, business or education. The two ministries that lead this initiative, Employment and Immigration and Aboriginal Relations, and the two supporting ministries, Alberta Advanced Education and Technology and Alberta Education have many initiatives underway.

Recommendation:

The Government of Alberta explore ways to improve communication with First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal communities and organizations about provincial programs and services for Aboriginal people, and to improve awareness and linkages across departments that serve Aboriginal people.

Commitment

The Government of Alberta's relationship with Aboriginal Albertans is changing. The First Nations Protocol Agreement, the MNAA Framework Agreement, and the Three-Year Conditional Grant Funding Agreement with MSGC all speak to relationships that are shaping the future for Aboriginal Albertans. We started this engagement in the spirit of the Protocol Agreement, on a government-to-government basis, to build relationships. We suggest that for real change to happen in terms of increasing workforce participation and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people there must be ongoing political leadership, political will and a real commitment between the GOA and First Nations, the MNAA, the MSGC and other Aboriginal communities.

While our term as a committee has ended, the commitment must not end. We encourage our fellow Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), if they haven't already done so, to build a relationship with the Aboriginal people and communities

in their constituencies. Likewise, we encourage First Nations and Métis leaders to take opportunities to meet with their provincial MLA, as well as municipal and federal representatives. We also encourage Aboriginal leaders, industry and educational leaders, especially those industries and institutions located in or near Aboriginal communities, to come together to look at ways to partner for jobs, skill training, and business development.

Moving forward with Aboriginal people and communities to create jobs and build economies will require multiple partnerships, collaborative planning and innovation. We ask the Government of Alberta to use the results and learnings from the FNMI Workforce Planning Initiative engagement process to create a GOA Aboriginal Workforce Action Plan. We also encourage further dialogue and engagement through the creation of new or existing mechanisms, agreements or arrangements.

Recommendations:

In keeping with the Province's commitment to a long-term workforce strategy, the Government of Alberta develop an Aboriginal Workforce Strategy, informed by the FNMI Workforce Planning Initiative and engagement process.

Further engagement regarding workforce participation and economic development continue on a government-to-government basis through new or existing mechanisms, agreements or arrangements.

The dialogue between the Government of Alberta, First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal communities, and the Government of Canada continue, with the commitment of all being that it leads to real action that makes a difference.

Conclusion

It became evident to the Committee during this engagement process that we are not the experts on what needs to be done. We know that not enough is being done and we know that we need to do things differently. We need to change what we've been doing, not because there aren't successes, but because there aren't enough successes.

What we are proposing is a way to make things happen for and with Aboriginal people, in partnership and collaboration. We will encourage government to do what it can, but we are looking to First Nations and Métis leaders and governments, other Aboriginal organizations and other levels of government to do what they can to move the recommendations to action. Collaboration means that all parties have a role to play and all parties are accountable. For many of the recommendations in this report, partnership is a prerequisite.

Increasing Aboriginal participation in Alberta's workforce and economy will require more collaboration between Aboriginal communities, and with industry, employers, education and training providers. First Nation, Métis and other Aboriginal communities need more partnerships that will result in education, training, and skill development for all Aboriginal people in Alberta. Aboriginal communities may need support to create the conditions that will bring about more economic development and employment.

There are many programs and services for Aboriginal people in Alberta, offered by a variety of government and non-government organizations, but it isn't clear that they are as coordinated and as effective as they could be. Connecting the dots between what's available and what's missing, and doing more of what works would make a real difference on many levels.

We all need to pay particular attention to developing relationships that will support young Aboriginal Albertans to be successful in school and the workplace. They are a rapidly growing population that could, if given the opportunity, help to reduce Alberta's labour shortages and to increase Alberta's productivity. This would be a mutually beneficial relationship for Aboriginal people, their communities, and our province.

From the outset of this engagement process in 2008, our intent as a Committee was to generate action. Since that time a lot of good work has happened in relation to Aboriginal workforce participation and economic development. Some of our recommendations are already underway. We are confident that continuing to work together will lead to more action and more positive outcomes for Aboriginal Albertans and Alberta.

Appendix A

Terminology

Aboriginal Peoples: is a collective name for the original people of North America and their descendants. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people: Indian (First Nations), Métis and Inuit. These are three distinct peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs.

Assessment: A process by which the client, or the client working together with an assessor, develops a client profile in order to make informed decisions about the most suitable programs, services, and supports required to assist the client to obtain employment.

First Nations: The term First Nations came into common usage in the 1970s to replace band or Indian, which some people found offensive (see: Indian). Despite its widespread use, there is no legal definition for this term in Canada.

First Nations People: Many people prefer to be called First Nations or First Nations People instead of Indians. The term is not a synonym for Aboriginal Peoples because it doesn't include Inuit or Métis. The term First Nations People generally applies to both Status and Non-Status Indians.

First Nation: Many bands started to replace the word band in their name with First Nation in the 1980s. It is a matter of preference by individual First Nations/bands.

Indian: The term Indian collectively describes all the Indigenous People in Canada who are not Inuit or Métis. Indian Peoples are one of three peoples recognized as Aboriginal in the *Constitution Act* of 1982 along with Inuit and Métis. In addition, three categories apply to Indians in Canada: Status Indians, Non-Status Indians and Treaty Indians. The term Indian is considered outdated by many people.

Status Indian: A person who is registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act* and thus recognized by the federal government as an Indian and accorded the accompanying rights, benefits, and restrictions of the *Indian Act* and related policies.

Non-Status Indian: An Indian person who is not registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act*.

Treaty Indian: An Indian person whose ancestors signed a treaty with Canada.

Inuit: An Aboriginal people in Northern Canada, who traditionally lived in Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador. The word means "people" in the Inuit language — Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.

Métis: The Métis National Council defines Métis as "a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation."

Urban Aboriginal People: Refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit residing in urban areas. According to 2006 Census data, off-reserve Aboriginal people constitute the fastest growing segment of Canadian Society.

Métis Settlement Legislation
On November 1, 1990 the Government of Alberta proclaimed legislation that provides for a unique form of government on the Métis Settlements. Developed cooperatively by the Province of Alberta and the Alberta Federation of Métis Settlements Association, this legislation establishes the only Métis land base and the only form of legislated Métis government in Canada. It was created in an effort to accommodate Métis aspirations of securing their land base, gaining local autonomy and achieving self-sufficiency.

Métis Settlements: Eight Settlements were established by the *Métis Settlements Act (MSA)*: Buffalo Lake, East Prairie, Elizabeth, Fishing Lake, Gift Lake, Kikino, Paddle Prairie and Peavine. Each settlement is run by a five-person Council that is elected by the membership and headed by a chair selected by the Council members. The MSA also created the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC), which is comprised of the five elected councillors from each Settlement, and four Executive Officers. The MSGC acts for the collective interests of the Settlements, owns the Settlement lands in fee-simple, and can make Policies which bind all eight Settlements, and which are gazetted in the same way as provincial regulations.

Settlement Councils can make bylaws provided that they do not contravene any provincial law or General Council Policies. Bylaws must be approved by the members of the Settlement. Settlement Councils are also responsible for determining the membership of, and land allocations within, their Settlements.

Sources:

Alberta Aboriginal Relations
gov.ab.ca

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
inac.gc.ca

Alberta Employment and Immigration
gov.ab.ca

Métis National Council
metisnation.ca

Acronyms

AE - Alberta Education
AET - Advanced Education & Technology
AHRDA - Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement
AR - Aboriginal Relations
E&I - Employment & Immigration
FNAHEC - First Nations Adult & Higher Education Consortium
FNMI - First Nations, Métis and Inuit
GOA - Government of Alberta
GOC - Government of Canada
HRSDC - Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
INAC - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
MSGC - Métis Settlements General Council
MNAA - Métis Nation of Alberta Association
UAS - Urban Aboriginal Strategy

Appendix B

MLA Committee Engagement Participants

MLA - COMMUNITY VISITS

Aseniwuche Winewak Nation

Fort McKay First Nation

Gift Lake Métis Settlement

Kapawe'no First Nation

Peerless Lake Community Association; Trout Lake Community Association

Siksika Nation

Whitefish Lake No. 128 First Nation

MLA – OFFICIAL ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

Aseniwuche Winewak Nation (AWN) - Grande Cache

Athabasca Tribal Council (ATC) – Fort McMurray

- Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation
- Chipewyan Prairie First Nation
- Fort McKay First Nation
- Fort McMurray No. 468 First Nation
- Mikisew Cree First Nation

Bigstone Cree Nation (BCN) - Wabasca

Hobbema First Nations – Hobbema

- Montana First Nation
- Louis Bull First Nation
- Samson First Nation
- Ermineskin First Nation

Kainai (Blood) Nation - Stand Off

Kee Tas Kee Now - Edmonton

Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council (LSLIRC) - Slave Lake

Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA) - Edmonton

Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC) - Edmonton

Nakcowinewak Nation of Canada - Grande Cache

Piikani Nation - Pincher Creek (Brocket)

Tall Cree First Nation (North Peace Tribal Council) - Videoconference

Stoney Nation – Morley

Yellowhead Tribal Council (YTC)

- Alexander First Nation
- Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation
- Enoch Cree Nation #440
- O'Chiese First Nation
- Sunchild First Nation

Tribal Chiefs Ventures Inc. (TCVI)

- Beaver Lake Cree Nation
- Cold Lake First Nation
- Frog Lake First Nation
- Heart Lake First Nation
- Kehewin Cree Nation

URBAN ABORIGINAL DIALOGUES

Calgary

Canada Safeway	YMCA Calgary Aboriginal Programs & Services
University of Calgary	Treaty 7 Management Corporation
Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary	Bullhead Adult Learning Education Centre
Region 3 Métis Nation of Alberta Association	Indian Business Corporation
Calgary Chamber of Commerce	Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative
The Business Link	Red Deer Aboriginal Employment Services
City of Calgary	Cenovus Energy
Community Futures Treaty 7	Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre
Calgary Board of Education	Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY)
Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL)	Grey Eagle Casino
Red Deer Native Friendship Centre	Personal Support & Development Network (PSDN)
Shell Canada Limited	Just Say Y.E.S. (Youth Employment and Skills)
Spirit Staffing	Alberta Children and Youth Services
Calgary Youth Employment Office	
Bow Valley College	

Edmonton

Aboriginal Youth & Family Well-Being & Education Society	City of Edmonton, City Council
Women Building Futures	Grant MacEwan Aboriginal Student Club
Nechi Training, Research & Health Promotions Institute	Employment Connections Team
Careers: The Next Generation	Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc.
Canadian Native Friendship Centre	City of Edmonton, Human Resource Department
River Cree Resort and Casino	City of Edmonton, Office of Diversity and Inclusion
Boyle Street Community Services	Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association
Boyle Street Education Centre	Norquest College
Peace Hills Pure Water	Alberta Women Entrepreneurs
Bissell Centre Employment Services	Alberta Health Services

MLA Committee Engagement Participants

URBAN ABORIGINAL DIALOGUES

Edmonton *continued*

Canada Safeway	Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association
Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC)	Trade Winds to Success Training Society
Aboriginal Women's Professional Association (AWPA)	Careers: The Next Generation
Clark Builders	Edmonton Economic Development Corporation
Children and Youth Services	Aboriginal Disabilities Society
Aboriginal Business Development Services, Business Link	Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) - Encana Aboriginal Student Centre
Métis Employment Services – Labour Market Development -Industry Relations	Husky Energy
Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC)	Boys & Girls Clubs of Edmonton
Edmonton Inuit Cultural Society	Aboriginal Learning, Edmonton Catholic Schools
Building Trades of Alberta	EmployAbilities
Métis Settlements Strategic Training Initiative Society	Peace Hills Trust
Edmonton Public Schools	Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton
Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Affairs Committee	Alberta Indian Investment Corporation
Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society	Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW)
Spirit Staffing & Consulting Inc.	John Humphries Centre for Peace and Human Rights
Wicihitowin: Circle of Shared Responsibility and Stewardship	CANDO - Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers
Edmonton Chamber of Commerce	Al-Pac
Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta	Yellowhead Tribal College
Settlement Investment Corporation	Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA)
Edmonton Marriott at River Cree Resort	Canadian Forces
First Nations Employment Connections	Aboriginal Disabilities Society

URBAN ABORIGINAL DIALOGUES *continued*	
Fort McMurray	
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo	Oilsands Developers Group
Employment and Immigration	Suncor Energy Inc.
Athabasca Tribal Council	Urban Development Institute Wood Buffalo
Keyano College	Nexen Long Lake Project
Community Careers Cooperative	Nistawoyou Association Friendship Centre
Youth Connections	ConocoPhillips Canada
Chipewyan Prairie First Nation	Advanced Education and Technology
Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association (NAABA)	Labour Market Development Unit, Métis Nation of Alberta
Grande Prairie	
Métis Employment Services	Grande Prairie Regional College
Native Counselling Services of Alberta	Métis Local 1990
Western Cree Tribal Council	Ainsworth Engineered
Dar Car Developments	Aquatera Utilities Inc.
Youth Voice	Independent Energy Managemen
Grande Prairie Regional College	Mech Analytics
Children and Youth Services	City of Grande Prairie
Métis Nation of Alberta Zone 6	Northern Alberta Development Council
Grande Prairie Friendship Centre	Alberta Health Services
Career Transition for Youth	Flint Energy Services Ltd.
Employment and Immigration	Talisman Energy
Lethbridge	
Aboriginal Council of Lethbridge	Saamis Aboriginal Training and Employment Society
Sik-ooh-kotoki Friendship Association	Piikani Employment Services
Kamotaan	City of Lethbridge
Just Say Y.E.S. (Youth Employment and Skills) Program	Lethbridge Aboriginal Career & Employment Centre Society
Miywasin Centre	Local 2003 Métis Nation of Alberta Association
Red Crow Community College	Blood Tribe Employment and Training
Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society	Blood Tribe Economic Development
Lethbridge Shelter and Resource Centre	University of Lethbridge
Fifth on Fifth Youth Services	Lethbridge College
Economic Development Lethbridge	
Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce	
Community Futures Treaty Seven	

MLA Committee Engagement Participants

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) – Alberta Region

Service Canada – British Columbia, Alberta, Territories Region

INDUSTRY, BUSINESS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

Alberta Education - External Advisory Committee

Careers: The Next Generation – Executive Team

Careers: The Next Generation – Field Directors

Employment and Immigration Training Provider Advisory Committee

First Nations Adult & Higher Education Consortium (FNAHEC)

Fort McMurray Industry Roundtable (Oil Sands Developers Group)

Grande Prairie Industry Roundtable (Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative)

Northern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association (NAABA) - Fort McMurray

Northern Lakes College – Slave Lake / Grouard (Videoconference)

Senior Academic Officers of Alberta Colleges and Technical Institutes

University of Alberta Council of Aboriginal Initiatives

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